

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BANGKO 17850 151234Z

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8291

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH, LA

SUBJECT: DAWEE ON THAI VOLUNTEERS IN LAOS

VIENTIANE ALSO FOR PAO

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL DAWEE CHULLASAPYA, MINISTER
OF DEFENSE, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 14. THE FOLLOWING
ARE RELEVANT EXCERPTS OF AN INFORMAL USIS TRANSLATION OF HIS REMARKS
ON THAI VOLUNTEERS IN LAOS.

BEGIN EXCERPTS.

SOME PERSONS SAY THAT I AM THE PERSON WHO ALLOWED THAI TROOPS
TO BE HIRED BY THE UNITED STATES. THIS IS A MATTER THAT IS VERY
SERIOUS, THEREFORE I WISH TO REACH CORRECT UNDERSTANDING
IN FULL, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT IS A FAIRLY DELICATE SUBJECT.
THE REASON DATES BACK TO THE TIME WHEN FIELD MARSHAL
P. PIBULSONGGRAM STARTED MAKING VARIOUS CONTACTS UNTIL THE
TIME OF THE FREE THAI MOVEMENT. LATER AMERICA HELPED US IN
NEGOTIATIONS FOR A PEACE AGREEMENT, WHICH BRITAIN HAD DRAFTED
IN THE FORM OF AN AGREEMENT
CONTAINING ABOUT 24 ARTICLES, SO FAR AS I CAN REMEMBER.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 17850 151234Z

IF WE HAD BEEN COMPELLED TO SIGN THAT AGREEMENT DRAFTED WE

WOULD MOST PROBABLY STILL BE TIED DOWN BY COMMITMENTS TO THIS DAY. ISN'T THAT TRUE? AMERICA HELPED US BY INTERVENING AND OPPOSING AND PROTESTING AGAINST THE DEMANDS MADE BY BRITAIN, AS WE KNOW FROM HISTORY. I PLAYED A PART ALSO AND I WAS THE PERSON MAKING CONTACTS BETWEEN LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN'S OFFICE AND THE CHIEF OF OSS IN KANDY. THEREFORE THAT AGREEMENT DRAFTED WAS NOT SIGNED WHILE WE WERE HAVING LUNCH. BRITAIN WANTED US TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT DURING THAT LUNCHEON. THIS MADE OUR THOUGHTS TURN TO AMERICA. IN ADDITION TO DR. CORT IN CHIANGMAI, WHO WAS SO LOVED THERE THAT HE WAS CALLED "FATHER CORT", THERE WERE MANY OTHER AMERICANS WHO HAD KINDLY THOUGHTS OF AND GOOD INTENTIONS TOWARD THAILAND AT THAT TIME.

LATER, WHEN THE KOREAN WAR BROKE OUT WE REALIZED THE NEED TO FIND A FRIEND, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE COMMUNIST DANGER HAD STARTED AND WAS EXPANDING STEADILY. THAT WAS THE REASON WHY WE SENT TROOPS TO KOREA, AND LATER IT WAS THE REASON WHY WE SENT TROOPS TO VIETNAM.

WHEN THE STAGE WAS REACHED WHEN THE COMMUNISTS WERE LAUNCHING HEAVY OFFENSIVES BOTH IN VIETNAM AND IN LAOS, WE CONSIDERED THE BEST WAY TO HALT THE ENEMY. IF WE CONCENTRATED ON HALTING IT AFTER IT HAD ENTERED OUR TERRITORY, OUR COUNTRY WOULD BE DEVASTATED AND LAID WASTE. BUT SINCE THERE WERE FRIENDS OPPOSING IT OUTSIDE OUR COUNTRY ALREADY, IF WE GAVE SOME AID IN THE OPPOSITION PUT UP TO HALT THE ENEMY IT WOULD BE A WAY TO WIN FRIENDS BEFORE THE DANGER REACHED US AND TO PREVENT IT FROM SPREADING INTO OUR COUNTRY.

THEN VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS APPEALED TO THE THAI GOVERNMENT TO SEND TROOPS TO HELP AND WE RESPONDED BY SENDING COMBAT FORCES TO SOUTH VIETNAM. THEN WE GAVE AID TO A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY -- LAOS -- AS YOU HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE ALREADY. WE HOWEVER WERE NOT ABLE TO FIND MONEY TO MEET EXPENDITURES INCURRED IN SENDING TROOPS TO FIGHT OUTSIDE OUR COUNTRY. WE HAVE MANPOWER; WE POSSESS KNOWLEDGE ON FIGHTING; WE HAVE EXPERIENCE IN FIGHTING. BUT PROVIDING EQUIPMENT IN FULL FOR FIGHTING, AND MEETING DAILY EXPENDITURES WOULD REQUIRE A HUGE ALLOCATION. IF WE HAD HAD TO INCUR SUCH HUGE EXPENDITURES, OUR ECONOMY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STAND IT FOR LONG. THIS WAS THE REASON FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BANGKO 17850 151234Z

AND THE GOVERNMENT DECIDING, REGARDLESS WHETHER REGULAR TROOPS OR VOLUNTEERS WERE SENT, TO USE MONEY OF A THIRD COUNTRY, OUR AMERICAN ALLY. WE DID NOT INCUR ANY EXPENDITURES, AS YOU KNOW ALREADY.

THIS COULD BE SAID THAT WE WERE WILLING FOR THAI TROOPS TO BE HIRED, BUT FROM ANOTHER ANGLE WE WERE NOT HIRED BECAUSE WE WENT TO FIGHT FOR THAILAND, TO PREVENT THE BLAZE FROM SPREADING INTO OUR COUNTRY AND DESTROYING THAILAND. BUT WE DID NOT HAVE TO

SPEND OUR OWN MONEY BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE FOR
US TO USE OUR OWN MONEY. IF WE HAD USED OUR OWN MONEY WE
WOULD HAVE FINISHED IT ALL SOON AND THEN WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?
I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT WE ENDEAVORED TO PERSUADE OUR FRIEND
TO GIVE US SOME HELP.
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